



42nd Infantry Division - Operation Iraqi Freedom 3 News

# DISPATCH

Volume 24

August 7, 2005

## Task Force Liberty Transfers Operating Base to Iraqis



*Coalition Forces render a salute to the United States Colors before they are cased and replaced by the Iraqi Colors during a transfer of authority of Forward Operating Base Omaha in Tikrit, Iraq July 30, 2005.*

Story and photo by Sgt. Matthew Acosta  
22nd MPAD

FORWARD OPERATING BASE OMAHA, Tikrit, Iraq - Coalition and Iraqi soldiers gathered in a mass formation during a ceremony here, which saw the base handed back to the Iraqis, July 30.

The FOB was turned over to the 1<sup>st</sup> Iraqi Army Battalion (IAB), 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade, 4<sup>th</sup> Division, signifying the increasing role the Iraqis are taking in providing security to their population.

"This is a very historic moment as they continue to transition into controlling this area," said Lt. Col. Todd R. Wood, commander, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry, 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade Combat Team, Task Force Liberty. "This (Iraqi) battalion has come so far in their training in such a short time; it is now conducting daily operations at the

company level."

Although Coalition Forces are turning the installation and local operations over to the Iraqis, they will provide support if needed.

"If they (Iraqis) need assistance, the quick reaction force will not be far away and can respond quickly to calls," said Capt. Ramone Osorio, fire support officer, 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn. 7<sup>th</sup> Inf. "However, their function will be taking care of the missions and patrols in the desert and in and around Tikrit, enabling us to step back and allowing them to assume the footprint with the Iraqi people."

As the Iraqi soldiers become more proficient in conducting operations, there will be more transfers of command posts to the Iraqi army. The FOB Omaha ceremony was a representation of three bases slated to close down within several days of each other in Tikrit,

Osorio said.

"Little by little you'll see the FOB closures and it will put us one step closer to turning entire operations over to the Iraqis," he said.

"It's a leap-frog type of plan," he added, "turning FOBs over and moving to other remaining FOBs until there are no more to move to and the mission is done here."

The Iraqi soldiers welcomed the transfer of the installation and vowed to uphold the fight of freedom.

"We must inspire the meaning of freedom and democracy and lead the enforcement of peace and stability here in Iraq," said 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Maija Mohamed, operations officer, 1<sup>st</sup> IAB.

"What we saw today was the type of thing that will allow the soldiers to see what their hard work is turning into- a physical thing they can be proud of," Osorio said.

## Task Force Liberty transfer authority to Iraqi army in Diyala



An American Soldier from the 3rd Brigade Combat Team Task Force Liberty lowers the 42nd Infantry Division "Never Forget" Flag in preparation of the Iraqi Colors being raised, signifying the transfer of former Forward Operating Base Scunior, in Baqubah, Iraq. (Photo by Sgt. Matthew Acosta, 22nd MPAD)

By Sgt. Matthew Acosta and Cpl. Natalie Loucks  
22nd MPAD and 1st BCT PAO

BAQUBAH, Iraq – Cheers rang out in the closing moments of a ceremony that transferred the security responsibility for one fifth of the Diyala province to the Iraqi army July 31.

Improved security in the Diyala Province has allowed Coalition Forces to successfully transition operational control of Forward Operating Base Scunior to Iraqi control.

"Today's ceremony is a demonstration of the Iraqi army's commitment to providing security for their own country," said Col. Steven Salazar, Commander of the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, Task Force Liberty. "They are well trained and equipped."

Iraqi soldiers of the 2nd Brigade, 5th Iraqi Army Division, hoisted the Iraqi flag over the newly named Forward Operating Base (FOB) Khamees, named in honor of an

Iraqi Army Major killed in action June 26th.

Diyala Provincial Governor Ra'ad Hameed Juwad believes the citizens of Iraq are gaining a sense of security.

"The Iraqi army gives confidence to the people of Iraq," Ra'ad said.

Delivering the ceremony's keynote speech, Ra'ad emphasized the progress the Iraqi army has made and said their progress is only the beginning of what they will achieve in the future.

"This is just one more example of Coalition Forces turning over control to the Iraqi people," said Salazar.

"It's our responsibility to take care of our land and to protect our people and we will do it," said Col. Saman Asi Talibany, Commander of 2nd Brigade.

The Iraqi soldiers welcomed their new responsibility as they assembled below the newly raised flag.

"Where are the terrorists today?" shouted the soldiers. "Hell for the terrorists today!"

## Arab leaders sign 'Declaration Against Terrorism'



The members of the Civil Military Working Group, pose proudly by the Declaration Against Terrorism, held by Abu Saef and Abu Saddam.

116th Brigade Combat Team

FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR, Iraq – Kirkuk Arabic leaders have stood up and said 'no' to terrorism by signing an historic "Declaration Against Terrorism" on July 24. The Civil-Military Work Group of Hawija held a meeting at the Kirkuk Government Building, where local Arab leaders gathered to proudly exhibit the newly signed "Declaration Against Terrorism."

An interpretation of the document held by Abu Saef and Abu Saddam reads as follows: "CONDEMNATION. We the sheiks of the Arabic tribes, and chiefs of the Hawijah council and all districts belonging to Hawijah, condemn in a tough and angry way all terrorist activity which targets innocent Iraqis. It is time for the Iraqi nation to support the (Iraqi) army and the Iraqi police in order to defend our country, our money and ourselves... whatever it costs."

This powerful declaration demonstrates the resolve of the leadership of Iraq to

take a stand against terrorists and terrorism, in order to protect the safety and security of the people from the attacks of cowards and criminals.

The declaration will be reproduced and handed out by Coalition Forces whenever possible during operations in Kirkuk Province.

Iraqi authorities encourage community members to contact their local Joint Coordination Center with any information regarding terrorist or criminal activities.



This is an enlargement of the Declaration Against Terrorism, signed by local Arab leaders on July 24.